[0099]     SECURE CLUSTER CONFIGURATION
DATA SET TRANSFER PROTOCOL

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[0101]                    Abstract of the Invention

[0102]      Communications between server computer systems of a cluster routinely exchange notice of configuration status and, on demand, transmit updated configuration data sets. Each status message identifies any change in the local configuration of a servers and, further, includes encrypted validation data. Each of the servers stores respective configuration data including respective sets of data identifying the servers known to the respective servers as participating in the cluster. Each status message, as received, is validating against the respective configuration data stored by the receiving server. A status message is determined valid only when originating from a server as known by the receiving server, as determined from the configuration data held by the receiving server. Where a validated originating server identifies updated configuration data, the receiving server requests a copy of the updated configuration data set, which must also be validated, to equivalently modify the locally held configuration data. The configuration of the cluster thus converges on the updated configuration.